

Remarks

Claims 1, 4, 6-9, 12, 14-19, 21, 23-27, and 29 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese patent no. 09288527 (“Yamashita”).

Claims 2, 5, 10, 13, 20, 22 and 28 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashita.

Claims 3 and 11 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the examiner for the finding of allowable subject matter.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections because each of the pending claims now contains limitations not disclosed or suggested by the cited reference.

The allowable subject matter from claims 3, 11 has now been incorporated into independent claims 1, 9, 17, and 26, by reciting a read-only limit field that specifies how many of the entries are available. Claims 2-3, 10-11, 20 and 28 have been cancelled as now being redundant.

The remaining pending claims each depend from one of claims 1, 9, 17 or 26, and therefore contain the same limitations not disclosed or suggested by Yamashita.

Claims 22 and 24 also have been amended in minor ways to correct possible antecedent problems that were previously not noted. These amendments did not make any substantive changes to these claims.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and indication of allowance by the Examiner is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions concerning this application, he or she is requested to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number shown below as soon as possible. If any fee insufficiency or overpayment is found, please charge any insufficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 4-1-05

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA, 22313 on.

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